

As the nation will decide in a few weeks what values we want our country to embrace, our City's values have been tested this year and we have emerged as a City making progress on our highest ideals and united to do even more.

This past year we have made progress on job growth, inclusion, quality of life, safety, and saw a 5% reduction in child poverty.

These outcomes are a direct result of us focusing on our values.

Let me state what I believe are Cincinnati's values:

We value equal opportunity.

We value safety.

We value diversity and inclusion.

We value neighborhoods.

We value social justice and we value collaboration to solve common problems.

So let us take stock of how we have lived up to our values this past year, and identify how we will continue to make progress on these values.

Over the past year, we have acted on our values to expand equal opportunity because when it comes to economic growth, our City is booming.

The State of our City is strong and growing stronger. If we work together, this rising tide can lift all boats.

The urban center of our City is experiencing the kind of vibrancy that is envied across the Nation. And now the Cincinnati Bell Connector will showcase this marvelous renaissance from the Banks through Over the Rhine. And what a renewed beautiful inner City the passengers on the Cincinnati Bell Connector will see. We are all thrilled the streetcar is off to a good start and I want to again thank City Manager Harry Black, John Deatrick Chris Eilerman and John Juech for bringing it in on time and under budget. I also want to thank Councilmember Amy Murray for her collaborative and friendly leadership style as chair of the Major Transportation committee.

The City continues to attract new companies and new talent. Last year we added over 1,200 jobs. I want to thank Oscar Bedolla, Luke Blocher and the entire Community and Economic Development team for their efforts. Keep it up.

And things are getting better. The last three years have been the highest recorded construction permit values of all time —over \$660 million annually—and have far surpassed pre-recession levels.

Year-to-date, nearly 1,100 permits have been pulled to build new residential properties in the City, more than doubling the amount of permits issued in all of 2015. For the first time since 1950 our City's population is rising again.

We will do whatever it takes to keep encouraging new residential development in our City.

People are coming to here because there is so much to do. And one of those new things is FC Cincinnati

FC Cincinnati has shattered USL league attendance records. Despite being a minor league team, they have brought more people to their games than most major league soccer teams.

The most popular sport in the world is associated with avid fans and the pride of cities around the globe. Anyone who has seen the fans in the Bailey knows that our fans can compete with the fans of any soccer team.

FC Cincinnati is here to stay. And it did not happen by accident. Many cities have tried to get into professional soccer without success.

But here we have the extraordinary leadership of Jeff Berding and Carl Lindner who have done it right.

That is why this year's Cincinnati of the Year is shared by Carl Lindner and Jeff Berding. Please come forward to receive your award.

But just as our economy is growing and our spirits lifted, we are working equally hard to close disparities within our City.

We are building a more inclusive City. When this administration took office the City spent roughly 2% of contracts with African American businesses totaling roughly \$4 million annually. Last year we spent about \$8 million. But this year, we will spend \$45 million. That is roughly 24% of the total contracts. Going from \$4 million to \$45 Million in 3 years is real progress.

Another way to expand opportunity is to provide the mentoring and acceleration small minority businesses need to succeed.

We salute the African-American Chamber of Commerce under its new leader, former Senator Eric Kearney, for his work to get businesses registered with the City and for increasing its membership.

We acknowledge the great progress that the regional Chamber's Minority Business Accelerator has made over the past 13 years and the ambitious goal of Darrin Redus to add \$1 Billion in sales and 3,500 jobs over the next five years.

The MBA helps companies that already have \$1 million in annual revenue and is a critical partner to expanding the African-American middle class.

But we also know that there are entrepreneurs in every neighborhood who cannot get their dreams started for lack of initial funding.

Derrick Braziel, Allen Woods, and William Thomas founded MORTAR, an organization that trains and mentors local aspiring entrepreneurs. MORTAR is recognized as a national leader for its efforts to help microenterprises get started in Cincinnati, with a focus on low income urban entrepreneurs.

But these budding businesses are struggling to gain access to crucial capital dollars to grow.

An example is Christina and Miles Davis, a couple chasing the dream of entrepreneurship with the Davis Cookie Collection. They are successfully selling their cookies in restaurants—in fact, you can sample their cookies after the speech tonight. But Christina and Miles do not have access to the capital they need to grow their business. If they had access to an \$11,000 loan, they could purchase the right equipment to grow their business and repay that loan with interest.

MORTAR wants to help dozens of minority entrepreneurs to become successful businesses.

Today, I am proud to announce that in 2017 a new microenterprise loan fund of at least \$2 million will be formed and companies groomed by MORTAR will have a chance to get the loans they need for their businesses. This microenterprise loan funds will be available to all Cincinnatians, but will have special outreach to African American and women owned businesses.

This is possible because of lots of hard work from MORTAR, Kathy Schwab of LISC, Bobbi Dillon and Paula Boggs Muething, and with resources from Jeanne Goliher and Joe Huber from the Cincinnati Development Fund.

I am confident that this new loan fund will expand our economy and help make our value of equal opportunity more real.

This has truly been a year of expanded opportunity in Cincinnati.

This year has seen progress on Safety too as we have acted upon our values to make the City safer.

Under the leadership of Chief Isaac and his command staff of Lieutenant Colonels Bailey, John, Theetge and Neudigate, there is renewed morale and a dedication to reducing gun violence.

During the year, I participated in a ride along with Officer Molly CaJacob, and a ride along with our Fugitive

Apprehension Squad, which goes out every day to catch the worst of the worst offenders. They literally go to known criminals' homes and pull them out of their beds.

I spent time with Eric Vogelpohl and his team, Scott Bode, Amber Bolte, David Dozier, Steve Peponis, Anthony Bischoff and Kenneth Kober, officers who show incredible bravery every day and take the worst of the worst off of our streets.

From College Hill to Roselawn, I walked with Citizens on Patrol, Shirley Biere, Kay Brogle, June Elwood, Amos Robinson, Kathy Sims, Betty Parker, Carrie Douglass, Mayola Booth, Allen Millsap, Robin Wood, Grace Wilson, Ron Moseley and the Bonaface family, Kay, Steve, Sheila. I saw the best of citizen activism—people who walk their neighborhoods and deter crime, getting to know their neighbors along the way.

I walked in Winton Terrace with the Outreach Workers, Peterson Mingo, Ali-Rashid Abdullah, Valarie Dowell, Tony Hill, Dorron Hunter, Aaron Pullins, Derrick Rogers and Steven Sherman after a horrific shooting, praying for the family and role modeling good behavior.

As every Citizen on Patrol knows, and I have seen first hand, our officers are working hard everyday to protect and serve. That is why this year's Employee of the Year goes to a Cincinnati Police Officer Donald Jordan. A 16 year veteran, he is an officer who goes above and beyond to make our City a better place. Outside of his police duties,

Officer Jordan is responsible for starting our City's Right to Read program, as well as the first ever Pitching for Peace community event in 2016. Right to Read is an initiative that places officers in elementary classrooms to tutor students. Officer Jordan, I commend you for your unwavering courage in serving as a Cincinnati Police Officer and for your commitment to our City.

Officer Jordan, please come forward and accept your award.

In addition to walking the streets, this year we hosted community forums in all five districts and listened to our citizens.

What we heard is overwhelming support for our police and a desire for more walking patrols and presence.

We also heard that citizens want us to find better opportunities for our young people.

And we heard that the heroin overdose crisis is an epidemic public health emergency that requires us all to do more.

We heard you on all of these issues.

Putting more cops on the street with the proper strategy and leadership to target repeat violent offenders is job number one.



In July, 50 police officers were sworn in. The next class of 30 is set to begin next year. Since 2013, we have added over 148 officers.

Under the leadership of Chief Isaac, crime is coming down. Despite a heroin crisis that has diverted first responders, gun violence has decreased by nearly 9% and 1 crimes have decreased by almost 7%. In fact, Part 1 crimes, which includes violent and property crime, have decreased by more than 12% since 2013.

We are part of an unprecedented collaboration among the Sheriff Jim Neil, Prosecutor Joe Deters and City Prosecutor Natalia Harris, the ATF, and US Attorney Ben Glassman, and our police.

In fact, we now have two City attorneys, Emily Woerner and Ashley Brucato, embedded in the US Attorney's office. Earlier this year, the US Attorney announced the arrest of 27 violent offenders. As soon as these arrests were made, we saw a reduction in shootings. Collaboration works. And we will keep working these partnerships.

Earlier this year, the City Manager, the police leadership, Hamilton County Prosecutor and I went to Denver to see their ShotSpotter, which is a state of the art technology that helps law enforcement agencies by directing police to the precise location of gunfire. This enables cops to aid victims, collect evidence and quickly apprehend armed, dangerous offenders.

We will be implementing ShotSpotter in hot spot enforcement areas of the City, which will give our police the tools to continue to reduce gun violence

We also heard citizens at our forum ask for more opportunities for our youth.

Under the new and dynamic leadership of Cincinnati Recreation Commission Director Daniel Betts, our CRC is planning a new paradigm of engagement with our youth. Instead of working in silos, I have challenged the CRC to form new partnerships with organizations, such as the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Cincinnati, which, under the leadership of Brent Seelmeyer, also makes a big difference in the lives of our youth. Historically, these organizations worked separately when the need for unity is so clear.

I have asked and Daniel has agreed to report to the public and City Council with recommendations on how to improve our CRC and enhance youth engagement. He will deliver this report by January 31<sup>st</sup>, in time for implementation by spring. We look forward to that report.

We also work hard to provide summer youth employment. I want to thank my staff for planning and implementing the annual Youth 2 Work career fair, which Jessica Baker has done a fantastic job leading with help from Bridget Patton, Teninnah Ross, David Laing, Kevin Osborne, and all of our sponsors. In 2017, we will do even more.

We also heard in our citizen forums about the heroin crisis.

First, let's be clear. This is a national epidemic, acute in our area, and will require way more resources than the City can provide.

Under the leadership of Fire Chief Braun, our firefighters have acted swiftly to combat this crisis. This year alone, first responders have administered over 3,700 doses of the life saving NARCAN drug to those who have overdosed on heroin.

In collaboration with the Hamilton County heroin task force, we are working to get our arms around the problem, provide the emergency care needed, and look to long-term solutions.

Thanks to PG Sittenfeld, the City is working with Talbert House to create a quick response team program to be piloted on Cincinnati's West side, and educating individuals on how to administer life saving measures.

We are also using data to get smarter in responding to the crisis. Thanks to City Manager Harry Black, we have created the Office of Performance and Data Analytics. Under the leadership of Leigh Tami, the City is mapping locations of overdoses and known drug deals in order to assist our first responders to help people and arrest the dealers.

We need to bring justice to the drug dealers who sell the lethal product in our City. The US Attorney Ben Glassman and our City Solicitor are working together to go after these heroin dealers. They are threatening the lives of our people and should be punished.

As we talk about reducing gun violence and the heroin epidemic through enhanced law enforcement partnerships and strategies, it is important to acknowledge just how much we are asking of our first responders. And we are asking more of our cops at the very time that police community tensions are rising around the country.

Our City's police community relations and historic Collaborative Agreement was heralded last year by U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch as a national role model. But it has been 14 years and our police and communities are dealing with new issues that did not exist back then. For example, we are now putting body cameras on our officers. How to manage that information in a way that protects victim privacy but also ensures transparency is a balance we have to get right. That is why I have called for updating and refreshing the Collaborative Agreement. In fact, the Independent Monitor from the Collaborative Agreement, Saul Green, who served in that role from 2003-2008 is willing to audit our efforts, give us a progress report, and make recommendations for continuous improvement. I will be asking City Council to approve this effort soon.

Overall, we have a comprehensive strategy to reduce crime by adding cops, adopting new technology like ShotSpotter, working in collaboration against heroin, and expanding outreach at our recreation centers. At the same time, we remain committed to the police/community relationships that have made our City's progress possible.

We have also made progress on valuing neighborhoods this year.

Last year, I told you about the Capital Acceleration Program, designed to get our roads and infrastructure back to good over a five year period. It will take all five years to get back to where we should be, but this year we got started. Big time.

Implemented under the City Manager's leadership, in 2016 nearly 200 additional lane miles will be either rehabbed or receive preventative maintenance. This represents roughly a 100% increase over previous years and you will probably have noticed the signs all over the City.

But we have more progress to make. We need to do a better job of picking up litter, cutting grass on City property and maintaining the gateway roads we all travel everyday to and from work. I will be asking City Council to provide the necessary funding for these basic services that have such an impact on the morale of our citizens.

We are delivering on the basics, but we also know that neighborhoods need positive economic development to make real and lasting progress.

By recommitting the proceeds of the sale of the Blue Ash Airport, we have invested a record \$40 million for neighborhoods projects.

Please watch this video that highlights just a few of these investments.

Thank you to Pastor KZ Smith, Susan Schaffer, Shawntee' Stallworth Schram, Larry Eiser, Cheryl Meadows and Mike Cappel for always being great community partners and helping us showcase these developments.

I want to thank University of Cincinnati Student McKenna Fryman for her work in putting that video together.

In Avondale, we will soon break ground on a transformative mixed-use development that will be anchored by a full-service grocery store and feature a total of 75,000 square feet of commercial space on the ground level, including a potential dental office and health clinic.

Here on the East side, we have started work on the Wasson Way Bike Trail: a proposed path that will go 7.6 miles from Victory Parkway to the Little Miami Bike Trail in Newtown. It will give 100,000 people, living within one mile of the trail, access to a network of over 100 miles of bike and pedestrian trails.

In Westwood we are bringing new life to Westwood Square. We will be partnering with MadCap and our Parks and Recreation departments to create a community-gathering place, a park, which is the focal point for the neighborhood and catalyst for development, and a distinctive setting for historic buildings.

In Bond Hill and Roselawn, we have formed a unique partnership among the community council, faith leaders and the Port Authority to ensure that the renaissance of those neighborhoods works for our residents.

These are just a few examples of the many projects we committed to, but we have finally matched our dollars to our rhetoric of investing in neighborhoods.

And to deliver even more quality of life enhancements in 2017, we intend to make history by achieving the City's long-term goal of establishing the first ever housing court.

This is critical because out of town absentee slumlords need to be held accountable for the damage they do to our neighborhoods. For years, City Lawyers Mark Manning and Jessica Powell have been bringing cases in municipal court, but they need all the powers of a housing court if we are to make the difference we all want. They have done a great job, but they need more help.

Housing Courts are critical to improving neighborhoods because they allow judges to really learn who the bad landlords are and hold them accountable.

Cleveland and Columbus have housing courts, but we do not because of the historic political mistrust between the City and the county. To get a housing court, we need our county prosecutor and judges to request one from the Ohio Supreme Court. They have never been willing to do so. I have worked to change that through outreach and collaboration. And now, for the first time ever, the Hamilton County Prosecutor Joe Deters will join with us to petition the Supreme Court of Ohio to create the first-ever Hamilton County Housing Court. I want to thank Prosecutor Deters for his help on such an important issue.

We value neighborhoods and we have truly made them a focus.

And through collaboration with City Council, 2016 allowed us to make progress standing up for progressive values and to build the middle class by leading by example.

Together, we passed a \$15/hour living wage for full-time City employees. Together, we passed the first ever local prevailing wage law to ensure living wages on major government projects. Together, under the leadership of Council members Seelbach and Simpson, we have provided six weeks of paid leave immediately following the birth or adoption of a child. Together, under vice Mayor Mann's leadership, we are cracking down on wage theft.



And together, we overwhelmingly voted to provide the cost of living increases that our police, fire, sanitation and health, parks and recreation workers have earned over the years. Thank you to Council members Flynn, Seelbach, Simpson, Sittenfeld, Smitherman, Winburn, and Young for standing with me for these workers

But valuing social justice goes beyond City Hall. What I am most proud of is the fact that my hand up initiative is putting low income Cincinnatians back to work at living wage jobs. The poverty rate has been reduced by 5% over the past two years and the hand up initiative is part of the reason why.

Please watch this video.

Thank you to Recoe Walker, Michael Vinegar, Tiara Fambro, and Marian Walker for sharing their inspiring stories with us. I am proud of what you have accomplished.

As you know, above and beyond the hand up initiative, a large coming together of nonprofit leaders, business leaders, faith and healthcare leaders have formed the Child Poverty Collaborative, which Vice Mayor David Mann and I are a part of and will report out recommendations in the next few weeks. The big hairy audacious goal of this effort is to move 10,000 kids out of poverty in five years. We cannot do that alone, but together I am confident we can. We will need everyone's help, so stay tuned.

Our next community summit will be held on Saturday, October 29th from 8:30am-12pm at the Duke Energy Convention Center. We hope you can join us.

Outside of City Hall, we are also working to close disparities in healthcare. Under the leadership of the First Ladies of several dozen African American churches, my wife, Dena Cranley, and her co-chair Barbara Lynch of New Jerusalem Baptist Church, are leading the 2nd annual First Ladies for Health family health day on Sunday, October 9th. Last year, over 2,000 people were screened. The First Ladies for Health is a volunteer group that educates and connects our community with resources to help them take charge of their health. This year 22 host locations offered through 35 participating churches, will provide free health screenings and other health-related services. More than 45 community partners and 800 volunteers are involved with the effort.

This is an incredible grassroots effort and I am so proud of my wife for her leadership.

I also want to thank Councilmember Christopher Smitherman for protecting the health of our community by leading efforts to ensure the safety of our drinking water. Recognizing the City's moral obligation to identify properties at risk for lead contamination, he called for testing. Councilmember Smitherman, thank you for swift action and leadership.

And we have taken enormous strides to live up the Statue of Liberty ideals of welcoming immigrants into our community.

The immigrant friendly task force that was co-chaired by Tom Fernandez and Raj Chundur put forth a series of recommendations that we are now implementing.

Under the leadership of Jill Meyer, the Chamber is taking the lead in creating the first ever Center for new Cincinnatians, which will become part of efforts to welcome people to our City and to help local businesses recruit the talent they need to compete.

The Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati and Catholic Charities are creating IDs for immigrants, homeless, returning citizens or anyone who would not otherwise have access to a government-issued ID.

These IDs will help new arrivals access basic municipal services and increase the safety of our communities.

I want to thank Rabbi Margaret Meyer, MARCC President, Ted Bergh, CEO of Catholic Charities, Tony Stieritz, Director of Social Action, and the Archdiocese for their work and collaboration on this very important initiative.

The IDs were so much in demand that families camped out overnight. By the end of the year over 1,000 IDs will be issued. I personally visited the ID intake center at

Woodward High School and was deeply moved by the people I met who are trying to make it in America.

In a year in which immigrants have been scapegoated, I am especially proud of our community for doing this. We did good.

And that is why I am giving Peg Fox the Humanitarian of the Year award. Peg is the Executive Director of MARCC, led this effort at MARCC and she deserves this honor.

Peg please come forward to accept this honor.

Living up to our values has not been a zero sum game, nor has it come at the expense of economic growth.

Our City is proving that we can grow the economy and expand opportunity at the same time. That building a progressive, fairer economy does not slow growth, it makes it sustainable.

We are making progress on living up to our values, but in order to keep making progress for this City we love, we have to roll up our sleeves and keep at it.

But as we pause to take a break once per year to assess the state of our City, let us cheer our success and commit to more.

Together, we have reduced violence. And let us keep working for a City where there will someday be no gun violence.

We have reduced poverty, but let us keep working until our ideal of equal opportunity is a reality.

We have expanded minority contracting, but let us keep working until the wealth of our economy reflects the rich diversity of our people.

We have invested in neighborhoods, but let us keep working until all neighborhoods meet their potential.

We have improved basic services, but let us keep working until its delivery is fair and consistent.

We are engaged in great and important work, building a City that works for all. There is nothing I would rather be doing and nobody but you I would rather be working with.

Together, we can prove what we already know—that cities are special because they are premised on the very notion that we are stronger together. I believe that and I know you do too.